

II. AMENDMENT TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 19, line 11 of the specification as follows:

Regardless of which of the above-described techniques are employed, the composite can be cut, such as by die stamping, to form mounting mats of exact shapes and sizes with reproducible tolerances. This mounting mat 20 exhibits suitable handling properties, meaning it can be easily handled and is not so brittle as to crumble in one's hand like many other blankets or mats. It can be easily and flexibly fitted around the catalyst support structure 18 without cracking and fabricated into the catalytic converter housing 12 to form a resilient support for the catalyst support structure 18, with minimal or no flashing such as by extrusion or flow of excess material into the ~~flange 16 area~~ flange area 16 and provides a holding pressure against the catalyst support structure 18 of at least one of i) at least 4 psi after at least 200 cycles or at least 1000 cycles of gap expansion testing at a nominal temperature of 900°C or ii) at least 10 psi after at least 1000 cycles of gap expansion testing at a nominal temperature of 750°C. More preferably, the ply provides a minimum residual holding pressure against the catalyst support structure 18 of at least 10 psi at a nominal temperature of 900°C after 200 cycles, or at least 6 psi, and even more preferably, at least 12 psi, at 900°C after 1000 cycles.